

IN THE CLAIMS:

MARKED UP VERSION OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS

(Version with marking to show changes made)

1. (previously presented) A method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat comprising placing a coin into a coin acceptance device of an entertainment automat; testing the coin in a coin testing device; displaying symbols on a symbol display device, wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols and wherein upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device;

controlling the course of the game with a control unit including a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator; influencing the course of the game by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat; substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol; renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached; and accumulating the obtained winning in the credit balance counter.

2. (original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat; simultaneously switching the played entertainment automats (1) into a uniform game mode upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance state of a common credit balance counter;

determining in a game mode the entertainment automat, which has reached the highest winning value within a time window predetermined by the control unit;

coordinating the winning value to that entertainment automat, which entertainment automat has reached the highest winning within the time limited game mode.

3. (previously presented) A method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat comprising
 - inserting payment into an automatic entertainment automat;
 - activating a game time after receiving the payment by the automatic entertainment machine;
 - randomly drawing all cards;
 - determining if a game time has ended;
 - displaying the winning values in case the game time has ended;
 - determining if a key has been depressed in case the game time has not yet ended;

determining if the depressed key is a hand out key or a hold key in case a key had been depressed;

randomly drawing cards not being held in case the hand out key had been depressed;

holding cards in case the hold key had been depressed;

actualize the intermediate state;

determining if a certain winning combination had been reached;

randomly drawing again all cards if the certain winning combination had been reached;

determining again if the game time has ended if the certain winning combination had not been reached.

4. (previously presented) The method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat according to claim 3 further comprising

determining if a special symbol combination or a jackpot winning value has been reached after inserting payment into the automatic entertainment automat.

5. (previously presented) The method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat according to claim 3 further comprising

networking a second entertainment automat to the first entertainment automat;

determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a master function;

determining which one of the entertainment automats assumes a slave function;

determining if a jackpot filling level has reached a predetermined release amount;

starting a jackpot game at the entertainment automat performing the slave function;

waiting till the slave is ready;

activating the game time for the entertainment automats;

randomly drawing all cards;

determining if a game time has ended;

collecting the game results of the slave entertainment automat in the master entertainment automat;

distributing of the game results to the slave entertainment automat by the master entertainment automat;

calculating of the winning amount;

displaying the winning amount.

6. (previously presented) The method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat according to claim 5 further comprising

sending a readiness signal to the master entertainment automat;

waiting by the slave entertainment automat for an activation of the game time through the master entertainment automat.

7. (previously presented) A method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat with a coin acceptance device and a coin test device, a symbol display device and a control unit for controlling the course of the game, wherein the control unit includes a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator, wherein the game course can be influenced by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat, and wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols, and wherein a symbol can be substituted by another randomly determined symbol,
wherein upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device (2), and wherein the symbols can be renewed within a predetermined time window, until the winning carrying symbol

combination is reached, and wherein the obtained winning is accumulated in the credit balance counter.

8. (original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the entertainment automats (1) are networked together, and wherein the played entertainment automats (1) are simultaneously switched into a uniform game mode upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance state of a common credit balance counter, wherein in the game mode is determined at which entertainment automat (1) the highest winning value is reached within a time window predetermined by the control unit (7), and wherein the winning value is coordinated to that entertainment automat (1), which entertainment automat (1) has reached the highest winning within the time limited game mode.

9. (previously presented) A method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat comprising placing a coin into a coin acceptance device of an entertainment automat; testing the coin in a coin testing device; displaying symbols on a symbol display device, wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols and wherein upon reaching of a predetermined symbol combination or upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device; controlling the course of the game with a control unit including a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator; influencing the course of the game by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat; substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol;

renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached; accumulating the obtained winning in a credit balance counter; and switching simultaneously the coin actuated entertainment automats disposed in the network into a common supplemental game when a predetermined value of a common jackpot is surpassed.

10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising monitoring a credit balance state with a first operational block exhibiting a game stake; monitoring the total playing time by a second operational block; randomly determining winning symbols during the complete game time by a control unit; illustrating and displaying the randomly determined winning symbols with a symbol display device;

activating a first branching block by a third operational block for determining the remaining residual game time;

determining in a second branching block in case of a presence of remaining residual game time, if an operating element furnished on the front side of the entertainment automat has been actuated;

performing a return to the first branching block in case of an absence of an operating element activation.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising

determining which operational element was actuated in case of an activation of an operational element;

presenting card symbols with the symbol display device;

drawing not held cards by new cards determined randomly from the card storage in a fourth operational block;

determining a winning value of a displayed symbol combination;

displaying the winning value in a fifth operational block;

checking in a third branching block, if the maximum winning value is displayed with the symbol display device;

holding the winning symbols displayed with the symbol display device upon remaining of a residual game time in the following by activation of an operational element;

performing a return from the third branching block to the first branching block upon checking if the game time has ended;

determining an actualized winning value in case of an ended game time in a sixth operational block;

performing a return from the sixth operational block to a first operational block by checking, if a further credit balance state for basing a further game stake is present.

12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising

determining symbol combinations randomly in case of a credit balance state exhibiting a game stake in the credit balance counter of the entertainment automat;

performing a switch over from a base game into a supplemental game by a control unit in case a predetermined winning value is coordinated to the symbol combination displayed by the symbol display device or if a particular symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device;

determining in a branching block if a preset jackpot winning value has been reached or surpassed for a predetermined symbol combination.

13. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising

monitoring a total game time by an operational block; randomly determining winning symbols by a control unit during a total game time;

displaying the randomly determined winning symbols with the symbol display device;

activating a branching block by an operational block for determining the remaining residual game time;

checking in the branching block in case of a presence of remaining residual game time, if an operational element present on the front side of the entertainment automat has been actuated;

performing a return to a branching block in case of no actuation of the operational element;

checking which one operational element was actuated in case of an actuation of the operational element;

checking in the branching block, if a maximum winning value is displayed with the symbol display device;

performing a return upon non-reaching of the maximum winning value from one branching block to a second branching block, wherein the game time is checked in the second branching block;

displaying winning symbols with the symbol display device upon remaining of a residual game time;

holding the display of the winning symbols by actuating of the operational element or throwing out all up to now held cards by actuating an entry block;

performing a return from the one branching block to the second branching block by checking if the game time has ended;

determining an actualized winning value in an operational block in case of an ended game time, and displaying actualized winning value with a coordinated display means; performing a return from a second operational block to a third operational block by checking if a further credit balance state sufficient for a game stake is present.

14. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, further comprising

initiating a network by actuating the power switch of each entertainment automat;

assuming of the master function by one of the entertainment automats, wherein the master function comprises essentially that a coordination of the entertainment automats present in the network is performed with respect to the collection of data through the counter state of the jackpot amount and the release of a common special game, which takes place at all entertainment automats present in the network at the same time;

switching the second entertainment automat present in the network to a slave function;

randomly determining a symbol combination in an operational block and displaying the symbol combination in the symbol display device in case of a sufficient credit balance state;

transferring an adjustable shared part amount of the game stake of each base game to a common jackpot counter;

checking the counter state of the jackpot counter in a branching block following to a determination of the winning value in the base game;

sending from the master a control signal to all other entertainment automats present in the network if the predetermined jackpot counter state is reached or surpassed, wherein the slaves switch to the supplemental game based on the control signal after termination of the base game;

monitoring in an operational block, if an okay signal was returned by all slaves;

starting the supplemental game at the same time in all participating coin actuated entertainment automats.

15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, further comprising

activating an entertainment automat in case of a credit balance state exhibiting a game stake;

monitoring a total game time by an operational block;

randomly determining winning symbols by a control unit and displaying the winning symbols with the symbol display device within the total game time;

activating a branching block for determining the remaining residual game time by the operational block;

checking in a branching block if an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat was actuated in case of a presence of remaining residual game time;

performing a return to the branching block if no operational element actuation took place;

checking in case of actuation of the operational element which operational element was actuated;

determining and displaying a game result of the displayed symbol combination in an operational block;

determining in a first branching block if a maximum winning value is displayed with the symbol display device;

performing a return from the first branching block to a second branching block in case of a non-reaching of the maximum winning value; and

checking the game time in the second branching block.

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, further comprising

performing a return upon reaching of the maximum winning value from a branching block to an operational block, wherein new winning symbols are randomly determined in the operational block and are displayed with the symbol display device;

displaying winning symbols in case of a remaining residual game time with the symbol display device and holding the winning symbols in the following by actuating the operational element or throwing out all up to now held cards by actuating an entry block;

performing a return from the first branching block to the second branching block;

checking in the second branching block, if the game time has ended;

scanning the individual results of the slave entertainment automats by the entertainment automat turned master in case of an ended game time;

accumulating the incoming game results by the master;

communicating the incoming game results from the master to the slaves;

determining the winning value in the following in an operational block;

displaying the determined winning value with the coordinated display means of a respective entertainment automat;

performing a return from an operational block displaying the winning value to a second operational block checking the game stake.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2,
further comprising
initiating a network by actuating the power switch of each of the
entertainment automats, wherein one of the entertainment automats
assumes a master function;
switching further entertainment automats contained in the network
to slave operation; wherein the slave function comprises essentially
that predetermined data are transmitted continuously to the master
after request;
randomly determining a symbol combination in an operational
block in case of a sufficient credit balance state;
displaying the determined symbol combination with the symbol
display device;
transmitting an adjustable share part of the stake of each base game
to a common jackpot counter;

checking in a branching block, if an instruction is present from the master to start thereupon a supplemental game following to the determination of the winning value in the base game;

confirming a receipt of the instruction of the start of the supplemental game to the master;

activating the entertainment automat in case of a credit balance state exhibiting at least a game stake;

checking by an operational block, if the master signal for the special games is present;

randomly determining winning symbols by a control unit during the complete game time;

displaying the determined winning symbols with the symbol display device;

activating a first branching block for determining the remaining residual game time by an operational block;

checking in a second branching block, if an operational element furnished on the front side of the entertainment automat was actuated;

performing a return to the first branching block in case no actuation of an operational element took place and in case of a presence of a remaining residual game time.

18. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, further comprising

checking which operational element was actuated in case of an actuation of an operational element;

determining a game result of the displayed symbol combinations;

displaying the determined game result in the operational block;

determining in a branching block if a maximum winning value is displayed with the symbol display device;

performing a return from a first branching block to a second branching block in case of a non-reaching of the maximum winning value;

checking the game time in the second branching block;

performing a return from the first branching block to a second operational block;

performing a return upon reaching of the maximum winning value, wherein new winning symbols are randomly determined in the second operational block and wherein the new winning symbols are displayed with the symbol display device;

displaying winning symbols with the symbol display device in case of a remaining of residual game time;

holding the winning symbols in the following by actuating the operational element or throwing out all up to now held cards by actuating the entry block;

performing a return from the first branching block to the second branching block by checking if the game time has ended;

performing a return from a third operational block to a fourth operational block by checking if a further credit balance state sufficient for a game stake is present.

19. (previously presented) A system for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat comprising
a first entertainment automat;
a second entertainment automat, wherein the first entertainment automat and the second entertainment automat are forming a network and are simultaneously switched, and
means for configuring the network connected to the first entertainment automat and to the second entertainment automat,
wherein
the first entertainment automat and the second entertainment automat are at the same time playing a base game, and wherein a predetermined winning combination or a predetermined winning value is reached in the base game, whereupon a supplemental game

is activated upon a trigger value on the first entertainment automat and on the second entertainment automat.

20. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19, wherein the first entertainment automat is furnished with a first additional operating element, wherein the first additional operating element is associated to each presented winning symbol and each presented winning symbol can be held in the following by action of the first operating element, and wherein the first entertainment automat includes a first separate processor and first software; wherein the second entertainment automat is furnished with a second additional operating element, wherein the second additional operating element is associated to each presented winning symbol and each presented winning symbol can be held in the following by action of the second operating element, and wherein the second entertainment automat includes a second separate processor and second software.

21. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19,
wherein

one of the first entertainment automat and of the second
entertainment automat performs a master function, and wherein the
entertainment automat performing the master function drives the
supplemental game which is performed on the first entertainment
automat and on the second entertainment automat.

22. (previously presented) The system according to claim 21,
wherein

the entertainment automat performing the master function
accumulates a jackpot amount as an adjustable shared part of the
game stake of each base game, and wherein the entertainment
automat performing the master function scans individual game
results and subdivides the jackpot winning amount.

23. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19 further comprising
a display means furnished as a central large display field, wherein the display means displays the temporary jackpot value.

24. (currently amended) A network of entertainment apparatuses comprising
a first symbol display device;
first operating elements disposed near the first symbol display device;
a first opening for receiving coins, tokens or banknotes;
a first payment unit;
a first control unit connected to the first symbol display device, to the first operating elements, to the first opening and to the first payout unit;
a first symbol game device connected to the first control unit;

a first video controller having a symbol memory storage and connected to the first symbol display device and to the first control unit;

a first read-only memory including

a first pseudo random number generator program,

a first winning value recognition program,

a first display control program, and

a first winning plan program;

a first communications board associated with the first control circuit;

a first serial interface disposed at the first communications board;

a second symbol display device;

second operating elements disposed near the second symbol display device;

a second opening for receiving coins, tokens or banknotes;

a second payment unit;

a second control unit connected to the second symbol display device, to the second operating elements, to the second opening and to the second payout unit;

a second symbol game device connected to the second control unit;

a second video controller having a symbol memory storage and connected to the second symbol display device and to the [[first]] second control unit;

a second read-only memory including

a second pseudo random number generator program,

a second winning value recognition program,

a second display control program, and

a second winning plan program;

a second communications board associated with the second control circuit;

a second serial interface disposed at the second communications board;

a cable connecting the first serial interface to the second serial interface;

wherein a determination is set as to what game stake part is to be delivered to the jackpot.

25. (previously presented) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24, wherein the first symbol display device displays the temporary jackpot value;

wherein the second symbol display device displays the temporary jackpot value;

wherein the first control unit performs an automatic recognition for determining which control unit assumes a master function and which control unit assumes a slave function;

wherein the second control unit performs an automatic recognition for determining which control unit assumes a master function and which control unit assumes a slave function;

wherein a jackpot prerelease value is set;

wherein the jackpot is frozen upon reaching of the jackpot prerelease value; and

wherein a jackpot playout game is started at the first control unit and at the second control unit.

26. (previously presented) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24, wherein the first symbol display device is furnished by a first flat picture screen and wherein the second symbol display device is furnished by a second flat picture screen;

wherein the first control unit is furnished with a first microprocessor and wherein the second control unit is furnished with a second microprocessor.

27. (previously presented) A method for operating a coin actuated entertainment automat comprising

placing a coin into a coin acceptance device of an entertainment automat;

testing the coin in a coin testing device;

displaying symbols on a symbol display device, wherein a displayed symbol combination comprises several symbols and wherein upon reaching of a predetermined credit balance in a credit balance counter disposed on the side of the control unit in the following a symbol combination is displayed with the symbol display device;

controlling the course of the game with a control unit including a microcomputer and a pseudorandom number generator;

influencing the course of the game by an operational element disposed on the front side of the entertainment automat;

substituting a symbol by another randomly determined symbol;

renewing the symbols within a predetermined time window until a winning carrying symbol combination is reached; and

accumulating the obtained winning in a credit balance counter.

28. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27,
further comprising

networking a second entertainment automat to the first
entertainment automat;

simultaneously switching the played entertainment automats (1)
into a uniform game mode upon reaching of a predetermined credit
balance state of a common credit balance counter;

determining in a game mode the entertainment automat, which has
reached the highest winning value within a time window
predetermined by the control unit;

coordinating the winning value to that entertainment automat,
which entertainment automat has reached the highest winning
within the time limited game mode.

29. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27,
further comprising

delivering a percentage of each game stake to a jackpot;

determining a reaching or surpassing of a jackpot release value;

activating a special jackpot game sequence upon reaching or surpassing of the jackpot release value, which jackpot game sequence is the same at each used networked entertainment automat;

giving to each player of each used networked entertainment automat the possibility to achieve a predetermined result within a predetermined time period, wherein the player has to reach a winning symbol combination predetermined by the entertainment automat after an arbitrary number of games during the predetermined time period.

30. (previously presented) A method of running a plurality of entertainment automats comprising

employing a first entertainment automat;

employing a second entertainment automat;

networking the first entertainment automat to the second entertainment automat;

starting the entertainment automats to run;

determining which entertainment automat from the first entertainment automat and the second entertainment automat assumes a master function within the network;

determining which entertainment automat from the first entertainment automat and the second entertainment automat assumes a slave function within the network.

31. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising collecting data relating to the games performed at the entertainment automats in the entertainment automat performing the master function;

managing a jackpot in the entertainment automat performing the master function;

filling the jackpot depending on the games performed in the entertainment automats;

determining if the filling level of the jackpot has reached a predetermined level;

initiating a supplemental game in all running entertainment automats simultaneously upon the jackpot having reached the predetermined level.

32. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat;

activating a game time (37) of the active entertainment automat;

randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat;

determining if a game time has ended (39) at the active entertainment automat;

presenting the winning amount on a display if the game time is determined to be ended;
waiting for another insertion of payment.

33. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 32 further comprising determining if a key is depressed (40) in case it was determined that the game time had not been ended; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed; holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed; actualizing an intermediate state (44); determining if a Royal Flush (45) has been reached;

returning process to randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat
in case a Royal Flush (45) has been reached; and
returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in
case no Royal Flush (45) has been reached.

34. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat;
activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat;
determining if a special symbol combination (49) has been reached;
returning process to inserting payment (36) if it is determined that no special symbol combination (49) has been reached;
activating a game time (37) of the active entertainment automat if it is determined that a special symbol combination (49) has been reached;

randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat;
determining if a game time has ended (39) at the active entertainment automat;
presenting the winning amount on a display if the game time is determined to be ended;
waiting for another insertion of payment.

35. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 34 further comprising determining if a key is depressed (40) in case it was determined that the game time had not been ended; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed;

holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed;

actualizing an intermediate state (44);

determining if a Royal Flush (45) has been reached;

returning process to randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat

in case a Royal Flush (45) has been reached;

returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case no Royal Flush (45) has been reached.

36. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat;

activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat;

determining if a jackpot winning value (49) has been reached;

returning process to inserting payment (36) if it is determined that no jackpot winning value (49) has been reached; activating a game time (37) of the active entertainment automat if it is determined that a jackpot winning value (49) has been reached; randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a game time has ended (39) at the active entertainment automat; presenting the winning amount on a display if the game time is determined to be ended; waiting for another insertion of payment.

37. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 36 further comprising determining if a key is depressed (40) in case it was determined that the game time had not been ended;

returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed; holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed; actualizing an intermediate state (44); determining if a Royal Flush (45) has been reached; returning process to randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat in case a Royal Flush (45) has been reached; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case no Royal Flush (45) has been reached.

38. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising starting a network (49);

inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat; activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a jackpot amount has surpassed a jackpot release value (52); returning process to inserting payment (36) if it is determined that no jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); starting the slave entertainment automat with the jackpot game (53) if it is determined that the jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); waiting till the slave entertainment automat (54) is ready; activating a game time (37) of the slave entertainment automat; randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a game time has ended (39) at the slave entertainment automat;

collecting the individual result (55) of the slave entertainment automat if the game time is determined to be ended; distributing of the sum of the individual result (56) to the slave entertainment automat; calculating a winning amount (57); presenting the winning amount on a display (58); collecting the jackpot amount (51).

39. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 38 further comprising determining if a key is depressed (40) in case it was determined that the game time had not been ended; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed;

holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed;

actualizing an intermediate state (44);

determining if a Royal Flush (45) has been reached;

returning process to randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat

in case a Royal Flush (45) has been reached;

returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case no Royal Flush (45) has been reached.

40. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising starting a network (49);

inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat;

activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat;

determining if a jackpot distribution game has been started (59);

returning process to inserting payment (36) if it is determined that no jackpot distribution game has been started (59); transmitting ready state to the master entertainment automat (60) if it is determined that no jackpot distribution game has been started (59); waiting for activating a game time (61) through the master entertainment automat; randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat; determining if the game time has ended (39); waiting for an individual result from the master entertainment automat (62) if the game time is determined to be ended; calculating a winning amount (57); presenting the winning amount on a display (58); waiting for another insertion of payment.

41. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 40 further comprising determining if a key is depressed (40) in case it was determined that the game time had not been ended; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed; holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed; actualizing an intermediate state (44); determining if a Royal Flush (45) has been reached; returning process to randomly drawing all cards (38) of the active entertainment automat in case a Royal Flush (45) has been reached; returning process to determining if the game time is ended (30) in case no Royal Flush (45) has been reached.

42. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising starting a network (49);
inserting payment (36) into one of the entertainment automats for obtaining an active entertainment automat; activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a jackpot amount has surpassed a jackpot release value (52); returning process to inserting payment (36) if it is determined that no jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); determining if a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed if it is determined that the jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); presenting the winning amount on a display (58) if it is determined that a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed; collecting the jackpot amount (51).

43. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 42 further comprising starting the slave entertainment automat with the jackpot game (63) if it is determined that a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed; waiting till the slave entertainment automat (64) is ready; activating a game time (65) of the slave entertainment automat; randomly drawing all cards (66) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a key is depressed (40); returning process to determining if the key is depressed (40) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed; returning process to determining if the key is depressed (40); randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed;

waiting until the slave entertainment automat is ready (67);
collecting the individual result (68);
distributing the sum of the individual result to the slave
entertainment automat (69);
calculating a winning amount (70);
returning process to determining if a predetermined number (x) of
games have been performed (71).

44. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality
of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising
starting a network (49);
inserting payment (50) into one of the entertainment automats for
obtaining an active entertainment automat;
activating a base game (48) of the active entertainment automat;
determining if a jackpot amount has surpassed a jackpot release
value (52);

returning process to inserting payment (50) if it is determined that no jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); determining if a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed if it is determined that the jackpot amount has surpassed the jackpot release value (52); presenting the winning amount on a display (58) if it is determined that a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed; waiting for another insertion of payment.

45. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 44 further comprising activating a game time (65) by the master entertainment automat if it is determined that a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed; randomly drawing all cards (66) of the active entertainment automat; determining if a key is depressed (40);

returning process to determining if the key is depressed (40) in case it is determined that no key was depressed; holding a card (46) if it is determined (40) that the hold key (42) was depressed; returning process to determining if the key is depressed (40); randomly drawing a card not yet held (43) if it is determined (40) that the hand out key (41) was depressed; sending an individual result (68) from the slave entertainment automat to the master entertainment automat; calculating a winning amount (70); returning process to determining if a predetermined number (x) of games have been performed (71).

46. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising displaying a jackpot level value; surpassing a predetermined threshold value of the jackpot;

switching the networked entertainment automats into a new game mode at a certain point in time;

activating a supplemental game at the same time for the networked entertainment automats;

distributing parts of the displayed jackpot to the networked entertainment automats;

furnishing a winning value to each networked entertainment automat participating in the supplemental game , wherein the winning value corresponds to the achievements of the player during the supplemental game;

assigning the winning value based on the filling level of the jackpot and the ranking position of the obtained game result at the end of the supplemental game.

47. (previously presented) A method of running a plurality of entertainment automats comprising employing a first entertainment automat;

employing a second entertainment automat;

employing a third entertainment automat;

networking the first entertainment automat to the second entertainment automat and to the third entertainment automat;

starting the entertainment automats to run;

determining which entertainment automat from the first entertainment automat, the second entertainment automat and the third entertainment automat assumes a master function within the network;

determining which entertainment automat from the first entertainment automat, the second entertainment automat and the third entertainment automat assumes a first slave function within the network such that a remaining one of the entertainment automats assumes a second slave function.

48. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 47 further comprising

collecting data relating to the games performed at the entertainment automats in the entertainment automat performing the master function;

managing a jackpot in the entertainment automat performing the master function;

filling the jackpot depending on the games performed in the entertainment automats;

determining if the filling level of the jackpot has reached a predetermined level;

initiating a supplemental game in all running entertainment automats simultaneously upon the jackpot having reached the predetermined level.

49. (previously presented) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 further comprising a third symbol display device;

third operating elements disposed near the third symbol display device;

a third opening for receiving coins, tokens or banknotes;

a third payment unit;

a third control unit connected to the third symbol display device, to the third operating elements, to the third opening and to the third payout unit;

a third symbol game device connected to the third control unit;

a third video controller having a symbol memory storage and connected to the third symbol display device and to the third control unit;

a third read-only memory including

a third pseudo random number generator program,

a third winning value recognition program,

a third display control program, and

a third winning plan program;

a third communications board associated with the third control circuit;

a third serial interface disposed at the third communications board;

a second cable connecting the third serial interface to the first serial interface and to the second serial interface.

50. (previously presented) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 49, wherein the first symbol display device displays the temporary jackpot value;

wherein the second symbol display device displays the temporary jackpot value;

wherein the third symbol display device displays the temporary jackpot value;

wherein the first control unit performs an automatic recognition for determining which control unit assumes a master function and which control unit assumes a slave function;

wherein the second control unit performs an automatic recognition for determining which control unit assumes a master function and which control unit assumes a slave function;

wherein the third control unit performs an automatic recognition for determining which control unit assumes a master function and which control unit assumes a slave function;

wherein upon a failure of the one control unit performing the master function, then one of the previous control units performing the slave function will assume the master function.

51. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising experiencing a failure of the entertainment automat performing the master function;

automatically assuming the master function by the slave.

52. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 47 further comprising experiencing a failure of the entertainment automat performing the master function; automatically assuming the master function by one of the entertainment automats performing the slave function.

53. (previously presented) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 47 further comprising employing the entertainment automat performing the master function for organizational purposes and not as a slot machine.

54. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 30 further comprising

furnishing a first control circuit (7) to the first entertainment automat and having a first communications board 20 and a first microcomputer (8) with a first serial interface;

furnishing a second control circuit (7) to the second entertainment automat and having a second communications board 20 and a second microcomputer (8) with a second serial interface;

wherein the first entertainment automat assumes the master function;

controlling a display means (21) of a jackpot and a data exchange and data balancing of the entertainment automat (1) disposed in the communications network by the first communications board (20);

a first connection running from the first communications board (20) to the first serial interface;

a second connection running from the second communications board (20) to the second serial interface.

55. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 54 further comprising forming the first serial interface as an RS-232 serial interface; forming the second serial interface as an RS-232 serial interface.

56. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 54 further comprising furnishing the first communications board (20) with a first self-contained central processing unit (22) and with a third serial interface (32) disposed on the side of the first central processing unit (22); furnishing the second communications board (20) with a second self-contained central processing unit (22) and with a fourth serial interface (32) disposed on the side of the second central processing unit (22);

coordinating to the first central processing unit (22) a first fixed value memory storage (24) and a first battery buffered operating data storage (25);

coordinating to the second central processing unit (22) a second fixed value memory storage (24) and a second battery buffered operating data storage (25);

furnishing a first connection between the first central processing unit (22), first memory components (24, 25) and a first serial communications controller (28) with first serial ports by way of a first address decoder 26 and a first I/O decoder 27 and a first bus;

furnishing a second connection between the second central processing unit (22), second memory components (24, 25) and a second serial communications controller (28) with second serial ports by way of a second address decoder 26 and a second I/O decoder (27) and a second bus;

connecting a first serial port (29) of the first communications controller (28) under connection of a first power amplifier 30 to the

first display means 21 formed as a first large display field, with which a temporary jackpot stand is displayed; connecting an external micro-computer to an interface (31) of the first communications controller (28); furnishing an interface adapter (33) connected at a serial interface 32 of the first communications controller (28), wherein the interface adapter (33) comprises essentially an optical coupler (35) for galvanic separation and a power stage (34) disposed successively to the optical coupler (35); connecting the network cabling (133) is connected to the power stage (34).

57. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 54 further comprising combining of the first entertainment automat (1) and the communications of the first entertainment automat (1) through the first communications board (20);

combining of the second entertainment automat (1) and the communications of the second entertainment automat (1) through the second communications board (20);

furnishing the first communications board (20) to carry a first individual address number, which is once set through a first rotary switch;

furnishing the second communications board (20) to carry a second individual address number, which is once set through a second rotary switch;

performing a first automatic recognition determining if the first entertainment automat 1 performed the master function or the slave function after switching on of the first entertainment automat (1);

performing a second automatic recognition determining if the second entertainment automat 1 performed the master function or the slave function after switching on of the second entertainment automat (1).

58. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 54 further comprising switching on the first entertainment automat (1); switching on the second entertainment automat (1); performing an automatic recognition after a switching on of each one of the entertainment automats (1) as to which entertainment automat (1) assumes a master function or a slave function; having the first entertainment automat (1) wait for a predetermined time period for a recognition signal of the master; having the second entertainment automat (1) wait for a predetermined time period for a recognition signal of the master; in case no recognition signal appears because neither the first entertainment automat nor the second entertainment automat (1) has assumed the master function, sending a master function assumption signal by the first communications board (20) after a second predetermined time period;

sending the master function assumption signal first from the first entertainment automat (1) with a lowest address number this signal first and assuming the master function by the first entertainment automat;

confirming a receipt of this master function assumption signal by the second communications board (20);

behaving as a slave in the communications network by the second communications board (20);

actualizing data by the master calls from the individual slave; accumulating a total sum and delivering the data back to the slave through the communications network every third predetermined time period times an entertainment automat number in the communications network such that each communications board (20) contains the same data contents;

assuming a master function by a slave in case of a failing function of an established master such that it is assured even upon failure of a master at each time that the valid state of data and the overall

functioning of the system remains intact with the exception of the original master.

59. (new) The method of running a plurality of entertainment automats according to claim 54 further comprising turning on the first entertainment automat (1) and the second entertainment automat (1); delivering to one master a master signal of a second master; deactivating the master with the higher address number and performing a slave function by the deactivated master; delivering from the first communications board (20) a release signal to the first control unit (7); performing a configuration of the first entertainment automat (1) with a micro-computer as to what percentage of the game stake is to be delivered to the jackpot.

60. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 further comprising

display means (21) of a jackpot and a data exchange and data balancing of the entertainment automat (1) are disposed in the network and are controlled by the first communications board (20).

wherein the first control circuit includes a first micro-computer;

wherein the second control circuit includes a second micro-computer;

wherein the first microcomputer (8) includes a first serial interface;

wherein the second microcomputer (8) includes a second serial interface;

wherein the first communications board (20) includes a third serial interface connected to the first serial interface;

wherein the second communications board (20) includes a fourth serial interface connected to the second serial interface.

61. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 60 wherein the first serial interface, the second serial interface, the third serial interface, and the fourth serial interface are RS-232 serial interfaces.

62. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24

wherein the first communications board (20) includes a first contained central processing unit (22) with the first serial interface (32) disposed on the side of the first central processing unit (22);

wherein the second communications board (20) includes a second central processing unit (22) with the second serial interface (32) disposed on the side of the second central processing unit (22);

further comprising

a first fixed value memory storage (24) coordinated to the first central processing unit (22);

a second fixed value memory storage (24) coordinated to the second central processing unit (22);

a first battery buffered operating data storage (25) coordinated to the first central processing unit (22);

a second battery buffered operating data storage (25) coordinated to the second central processing unit (22);

a first address decoder (26);

a first I/O decoder (27); and

a first bus, wherein the first address decoder (26), the first I/O decoder (27) and the first bus perform a connection between the first central processing unit (22), the first fixed value memory storage (24), the first battery buffered operating data storage (25) and a first serial communications controller (28) with first serial ports;

a second address decoder (26);

a second I/O decoder (27); and

a second bus, wherein the second address decoder (26), the second I/O decoder (27) and the second bus perform a connection between the second central processing unit (22), the second fixed value memory storage (24), the second battery buffered operating data storage (25) and a second serial communications controller (28) with second serial ports;

a first power amplifier (30);

display means (21) formed as a large display field;

a first serial port (29) furnished to the first communications controller (28) and leading under connection of the first power amplifier (30) to the display means (21), which display means (21) displays the temporary jackpot stand.

63. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 further comprising
an external micro-computer connectable to a first interface (31) of the first communications controller (28);

a first interface adapter (33) connected to a first serial interface (32) of the first communications controller (28);
wherein the first interface adapter 33 comprises essentially a first optical coupler (35) for galvanic separation and a first power stage (34) disposed successively to the optical coupler (35); and network cabling (133) connected to the power stage 34.

64. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24

wherein the first communications board (20) connects a first entertainment automat (1) to a second entertainment automat (1) and performs communications of the first entertainment automat (1);

wherein the first communications board (20) carries a first individual address number, which is once set through a first rotary switch;

wherein an automatic recognition is performed determining whether the first entertainment automat (1) performs a master function or a slave function after switching on of the entertainment automat (1).

65. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24

wherein an automatic recognition is performed as to whether a first entertainment automat (1) or a second entertainment automat (1) assumes a master function or a slave function after switching on of the first entertainment automat (1) and/or the second entertainment automat (1);

wherein the first entertainment automat (1) waits for a first predetermined time period for a recognition signal of a master.

66. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 wherein

a master with a higher address number will deactivate and perform a slave function in case more than one master should respond after turning on of a first entertainment automats (1) and after turning on a second entertainment automat (1) and in case one master received a master signal of another master.

67. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 wherein

the first communications board (20) delivers a release signal to the first control unit (7) after a successful automatic determination of the master/slave function to be performed by a first entertainment automat (1) and by a second entertainment automat (1), after a turning on of the first entertainment automat (1) and of the second entertainment automat (1).

68. (new) The network of entertainment apparatuses according to claim 24 further comprising
a micro-computer connected to the first communication board (20)
for performing a configuration as to what percentage of a game stake case is to be delivered to the jackpot through an interface;
a central large display field (21), wherein the filling state of the jackpot is illustrated with the first symbol display device (2), with the second symbol display device (2) and through the central large display field (21).

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 53 continue to be in the case.

New claims 54 through 68 are being introduced.

The new claims have the following basis:

Claim Basis:

- 54 Specification, page 9, line 15 to page 10, line 1
- 55 Specification, page 9, line 23 to page 10, line 1
- 56 Specification, page 10, line 2 to page 11, line 3
- 57 Specification, page 11, lines 4 through 12
- 58 Specification, page 11, line 12 to page 12, line 22
- 59 Specification, page 12, line 23 to page 13 line 11
- 60 Specification, page 9, line 15 to page 10, line 1
- 61 Specification, page 9, line 23 to page 10, line 1
- 62 Specification, page 10, lines 2 to line 17
- 63 Specification page 10, line 17 to page 11, line 3
- 64 Specification, page 11, lines 4 through 12
- 65 Specification, page 11, lines 12 through 18
- 66 Specification, page 12, line 23, to page 13, line 4
- 67 Specification, page 13, lines 5 to 9
- 68 Specification, page 13, lines 9 to 16

*The Office Action refers to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102
and to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

Claims 1-9, 12 & 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Vancura. Vancura discloses Gaming Machines with Bonusing. In his game he teaches the playing of a bonus game in a secondary machine adjacent to a primary machine. Vancura's invention substantially teaches the limitations as claimed.

Referring to Claim 1, 3, 7 & 9, according to the Office Action,

Vancura teaches:

- that the primary machine acts as a traditional slot machine (col. 18, lines 22-24).
- that the primary gaming machine can be a suitable gaming machine, such as, slot, poker, keno etc.; and

Claim 54 is distinguished from the Vancura reference by requiring “wherein the first entertainment automat assumes the master function;” where Vancura fails to teach the operation of master and slave functions..

Claim 56 specifies the step of “connecting a first serial port (29) of the first communications controller (28) under connection of a first power amplifier 30 to the first display means 21 formed as a first large display field, with which a temporary jackpot stand is displayed;”. This feature of the present application of displaying a temporary jackpot on a large display screen is clearly absent from Vancura.

Claim 57 requires the following steps: “furnishing the first communications board (20) to carry a first individual address number, which is once set through a first rotary switch;

furnishing the second communications board (20) to carry a second individual address number, which is once set through a second rotary switch;”. The feature that a communications board is set through a rotary switch is clearly absent from the Vancura reference.

Claim 58 requires the step of “performing an automatic recognition after a switching on of each one of the entertainment automats (1) as to which entertainment automat (1) assumes a master function or a slave function;”.. NO automatic recognition of master or slave is taught or suggested in the reference Vancura.

Claim 59 specifies the step of “deactivating the master with the higher address number and performing a slave function by the deactivated master;”. As the reference Vancura fails to suggest any master and slave function, no deactivation of any master is outside the suggestions of Vancura.

Claim 60 states that the first communications board (20) includes a third serial interface connected to the first serial interface of the first microcomputer. The reference Vancura in contrast does not teach that a communications board of an entertainment automat communicates with a microprocessor of the entertainment automat through a serial interface.

Claim 62 presents the following language: “a first serial port (29) furnished to the first communications controller (28) and leading under connection of the first power amplifier (30) to the

display means (21), which display means (21) displays the temporary jackpot stand.”. There is no temporary jackpot in the Vancura reference and consequently the reference Vancura fails to display such temporary jackpot.

Claim 63 specifies that “the first interface adapter 33 comprises essentially a first optical coupler (35) for galvanic separation”. There is just no mentioning of galvanic separation in the reference Vancura.

Claim 64 specifies “wherein the first communications board (20) carries a first individual address number, which is once set through a first rotary switch;”.

Applicant urges that the Vancura reference fails to teach that a first rotary switch will set the first individual address number.

Claim 65 furnishes that “an automatic recognition is performed as to whether a first entertainment automat (1) or a second entertainment automat (1) assumes a master function or a slave function”. No automatic determination as to assumption of a master function is taught in the Vancura reference.

Claim 66 says that “a master with a higher address number will deactivate and perform a slave function”. Since there is no master present according to the Vancura reference, here is also no deactivation of a master taught in the reference Vancura.

Claim 67 reads as follows: “the first communications board (20) delivers a release signal to the first control unit (7) after a successful automatic determination of the master/slave function to be performed”. Applicant urges that no determination of master/slave function is performed according to the Vancura reference and consequently no signal to that effect is generated by the Vancura reference.

Claim 68 specifies that the filling state of the jackpot is illustrated through the central large display field (21). There is no filling state of a jackpot according to the Vancura reference and consequently no large display field is present in Vancura for showing the non-existing filling state of the jackpot.

Reconsideration of all outstanding rejections is respectfully requested.

All claims as presently submitted are deemed to be in form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

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